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ABSTRACT

Chinese immigration to the United States in the 19th century was predominantly male. White racism led to the passage of Exclusion Laws, which severely restricted the immigration of the wives of the earlier migrants. This, coupled with miscegenation laws, has seriously affected the demographics of Chinese Americans. The underrepresentation of Chinese, and of Chinese elderly in particular, has hindered their ability to obtain their share of government attention. The underrepresentation of Chinese elderly is further complicated by the myth that Asian Americans have no social problems and that the Chinese elderly are cared for exclusively by their families. Recent studies have confirmed a sense of powerlessness or helplessness among the Asian American elderly. The Chinese elderly, suffering from such learned helplessness, have been assumed to exhibit passivity as a cultural trait. However, an analysis of the historical situation of Chinese immigrants shows that this may be an induced trait which is the product of American society. Fortunately, there is evidence that directive therapy can reverse the deficits produced by learned helplessness. (Author/RLV)

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by

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LEARNED HELPLESSNESS: THE NEED FOR SELF-DETERMINISM AMONG THE CHINESE AMERICAN ELDERLY

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Eugene Franklin Wong

While the present article addresses the need for self-determinism among the Chinese American elderly specifically, it is suggested that, notwithstanding certain historical and cultural dissimilarities between the Chinese and other Asian groups,[1] the essential concept and factors to be discussed are applicable to one degree or another to many Asian and Pacific American elderly. Furthermore, in respect of that consideration, because the Chinese constituted the first sizable Asian contingent to emigrate to the United States, becoming in the process a prototypal minority subject to the American response to Asian immigration and its real and imagined social impact, and because they have been one Asian group in whom considerable interest has evolved over a sufficient period of time from which a relatively fluid analysis can be made in the context of studying the Asian and Pacific minorities together, the Chinese case in instructive.

In structuring a coherent analysis of the status and condition of the Chinese American elderly, incorporating their particular needs and characteristics, it is fundamental to delineate those features of Chinese American social history that have made for the unique confines within which those elderly must function. Consequently, a brief discussion of the past as it bears upon the present is central to putting into proper perspective the dilemma of learned helplessness, as a conceptual analytical framework, and the necessity to stress self-determinism through education among the Chinese elderly in \merica.

The Chinese elderly as a sub-section of the American aged: Generally speaking, the Chinese American elderly are a sub-part of one of the country's growing minorities, namely, those persons sixty-five years old or older. As of 1975, that segment of the public officially classified as elderly comprised 15% of the total adult population, or about 21 million persons.[2] Although there is still controversy concerning the growth potential of the elderly, it is a relative certainty that they will continue to represent a considerable portion of the American population in the foreseeable future.[3] So, too, their recognition as a legitimate minority was manifested in the Older Americans Act of 1965[4] and reaffirmed in the White House Conference on Aging in 1971. That the elderly are and will continue to be a substantive section of the American public--one that must be acknowledged both in terms of their contributions to the country as well as in consideration of their special needs--is to all intents and purposes an established fact of American life. However, the Chinese elderly have been faced with problems in excess of those encountered by white persons and even by members of other racial minorities. Given the peculiar dimensions of Chinese American social history, those problems are largely, albeit not exclusively, a function of the United States' anti-Sinitic tradition and the ongoing insensitivity and arbitrariness with which the Chinese minority has been treated.

Chinese labor and white racism: Prefaced by a fleeting period of curiosity, American anti-Sinicism became a near immediate extension of the most durable ideology to take hold in the United States--white racism.[5] The early Chinese who emigrated to America were popularly labeled "sojourners,"[6] or men who journeyed to a foreign land for the sole purpose of making money in sufficient quantity to allow them to return to China as rich men. Theirs was not to stay in the foreign land, although many of them did just that and as somewhat less

than wealthy men. Of the few belongings they brought with them, it was their labor, the strength of their backs, that was initially most appealing to their American hosts, particularly in the state of California with its extreme labor gap. By the mid-1850's, the Chinese had plugged the hole in California's labor market with such effectiveness that in many places, and among many white persons, they were considered a "veritable god-send."[7] But unlike the other racial minorities in America's midst, the Chinese were from the outset oblivious to those constraints directed against all non-whites by way of white racist ideology. So intense was the Chinese desire to compete on the open market for the purpose of achieving their assigned task that they literally confronted their hosts in the spirit of competition.

There was little in labor that could be done that the Chinese did not do. Chinese diversity and versatility quickly became so complete that Henryk Sienkiewicz, the Polish novelist and author of Quo Vadis? summarized the kind of work they could and did perform with the single word, "'Everything'."[8] In time, however, as the demand for labor in the state diminished, and ecomonic difficulties plagued the country, white perceptions of the Chinese labor force became more realistically aligned with the ideology of white racism and the place the Chinese, as non-whites, should be assigned in it. Increasingly, Chinese competition was viewed as unfair to white labor, that the so-called Chinese coolies, by virtue of bio-cultural peculiarities all of which were detrimental to the pillars of Americanism, were in fact undermining the welfare of American workingmen by monopolizing certain--and altogether too many--industries. Contemporaneously, greater infusions of racist strains poured into the turn of public opinion against the Chinese, coupling in their wake to more definitively anti-Sinitic presumptions concerning the morality[9] of the Chinese and the desirability of having them in the state, indeed in the country, at all.

Anti-Sinitic sentiment was of such magnitude that, contrary to popular belief, the Western part of the country was joined by every other section, including the Eastern seaboard whose Chinese population was practically non-existent. In point of fact, American fear and dread of the Chinese were expressed in the Eastern United States "at least as early as they were expressed in California."[10]

The movement to exclude the Chinese from America: Thus the initial perception of the Chinese immigrants, almost all of whom were men, as curious and otherwise innocuous human oddities[11] degenerated steadily. Public pronouncements against the so-called Celestials were issued by seemingly responsible political officials[12] and in due course seized upon by every strata of society, not the least of whom were "hoodlums and ne'er-do-wells."[13] Acts of violence against the Chinese were frequent and brutal.[14] And legal articles of anti-Sinitic harassment such as the Cue Cutting and Cubic Air Ordinances were unconscionably designed to make the life of the Chinese in the United States one of constant and unbearable misery.[15] The ideology of white racism and its outspoken exponents relegated economic competition and cultural differences secondary to, but substantive reinforcements of,[16] race. Questions of race and the policy of racism became the main issues between the Chinese minority and the Americans.[17]

The thoroughgoing proportions of the anti-Sinitic sentiment sweeping the country, taken up by sand-lot politicians, American nativists, and dedicated racists alike, gave rise to an unprecedented impulse. The Chinese problem, unlike the problems presented by other racial minorities, was thought to be solvable by a process so extreme in its intent and so vigorous in its execution that, by the turn of the century, one observer referred to it as "an extermination law."[18] For the first time in American history the movement afoot was one of complete and total exclusion of an emigrating people on the basis of race.

While the Sino-American treaty of 1868, the Burlingame Treaty, clearly recognized the right of both the American and Chinese peoples to change, if they so desired, their nationality and place of residence, that is, reciprocity on the issues,[19] the United States Congress, doubtless under the influence but not the coercion of racists, nativists, and political opportunists, joined in the anti-Sinitic movement and established the groundwork for Chinese exclusion, abrogating as a matter of course treaty stipulations with the Chinese government.

The Exclusion Laws: By 1882, the United States Congress--speaking for the country as a whole, not just for the Western states--passed the first discriminatory immigration legislation based upon race in the Bill entitled An Act to Execute Certain Treaty Stipulations Relating to Chinese, which later was to be commonly known as the first Exclusion Law. From 1882 to 1924, the United States passed no less than fourteen Bills relating to the exclusion of the Chinese (including in time all Asians), each of which was contrived to modify and refine preceding Bills with greater thoroughness. The Scott Act of 1888 was primarily the instrument that cut across the issues of nationality and classified the Chinese as a race unto themselves, regardless of their citizenship. Thus, Chinese from countries other than China were not differentiated from those that were from China.[20] In like fashion, by 1902, the United States extended its anti-Sinitic legislation to include all territories acquired by the United States. In the case of the Filipino Chinese, the Americans stated their rationale, despite highly deceptive reasons to justify the exportation of American anti-Sinicism:[21]

> the desire of the United States to be able to sustain its own immigration and exclusion laws against possible migration of Chinese from the Philippines to the [United] States.[22]

The Immigration Act of 1924, the last of the series of legislative steps to exclude the Chinese, was profound in its impact on the overall demographic status of the Chinese, affecting over time the entire social configuration of the Chinese American population, especially the family structure and ultimately the position of the elderly. The Act was in its effects of near genocidal proportions when coupled with earlier Exclusion Laws.

Although the Chinese minority had never prior to exclusion legislation constituted a significant percentage of the United States' population as measured against the whites, regardless of wild exaggerations disseminated by the anti-Sinitic press and highly emotive pamphleteers, the Exclusion Laws taken together were extremely effective in decreasing the size of the Chinese minority. From a high of 107,488 in 1890, as the 1882 legislation had begun to nip the peak, the total number of Chinese diminished drastically to a mere 61,639 by the 1920's.

Augmenting in effect the express objectives of the exclusion legislation, the married Chinese immigrants continued to adhere to the established practice of leaving their wives and children in China. The end result of the practice was a severe imbalance in the Chinese male/Chinese female ratio. At the same time, celibate Chinese men, who by the 1888 Scott Act were constrained to postpone visitations to China--the purpose of which very often was to marry a Chinese woman--as to do so would disallow their re-entry into the United States, were by the forces of white racism prohibited from engaging in the immigrant sojourner alternative of intermarrying with indigenous women,[23] in this instance presumably American white women, by a number of state miscegenation laws which by name debarred marriage between a Chinese man and a white woman.[24] Taking into consideration those few Chinese men who by exception did have their

Chinese wives in America, the replacement of deceased Chinese and the expansion of the Chinese American population by birthrate were practically non-existent.[25]

Hence with the growth of the Chinese American population already on the decrease as a result of 1) the Exclusion Laws passed prior to 1924, 2) the return of disheartened Chinese to China, 3) miscegenation laws which specifically disallowed marriage between a Chinese man and a white woman, and 4) an ongoing death rate among those Chinese men in the United States, the 1924 Immigration Act was definitive in putting the final and genocidal complement "designed to phase the Chinese out of the U.S."[26] In a word, the Act prohibited the reunion of Chinese men residing in the United States and their Chinese wives.

The Act successfully blocked the one remaining legal way the Chinese could keep themselves from being rendered extinct by natural attrition as a minority group. The rationale governing the new legislation stated that no alien, in this case clearly the Chinese, who was by American law ineligible for citizenship could enter the country. Although as early as 1790 all non-white persons were not considered eligible for American citizenship by the dictate of the naturalization law of that year, the end of the American Civil War witnessed a revision of that legislation by extending American citizenship to the Blacks. However, the biracial mentality of the Americans, concentrated on Blacks and whites, excluded the Yellow race completely. Consequently, until the early 1950's the Chinese were still denied the right to become naturalized American citizens on the basis of their being neither "'free white persons' nor black."[27] Chinese women, then, whether or not married to Chinese men residing in the United States, were by their nationality and race automatically classified as aliens who were ineligible for American citizenship and, thus, barred from joining their husbands in the United States. All doors had by 1924 been

secured against the Chinese, the alien-ineligible-for-citizenship clause providing the fifth factor effecting the intended phase out of the Chinese in America.

However, the racist implications of the Exclusion Acts prompted the Chinese to seize upon the immoral and unjust practices directed against them, particularly when Americans held the rights of most-favored-nation and extra-territoriality in China. The immoral and unjust perception of the American legislation provided the incentive for many Chinese to enter the United States by circuitous means, thereby becoming illegal aliens subject to deportation. Nevertheless, these illegal persons constituted the substantive element that intercepted what was, throughout much of the 62 years of Chinese exclusion, presumed to be the final solution to the Chinese problem in America. Thus:

> To preserve themselves against complete extinction, the Chinese resorted to inconspicuous circumvention of the immigration laws so that, for a half century before repeal, the Chinese population for the entire country hovered around 60,000 to 80,000 and was almost all adult male, with few females and few children. It was the express intent of the U.S. government to keep it that way.[28]

The anti-Sinitic movement, although having fallen short of its long-term goal of completely eliminating the Chinese from the United States, was extra-ordinarily effectual in retarding the growth of the Chinese population. Indeed, well into the 1930's still few Chinese men had wives (and hence children) in the United States.[29] While other minorities were able to produce subsequent generations in the country, enlarging their numbers and national identity, the Chinese struggled to maintain first generation identity, and only then

intermittently through diffuse groups of immigrant males, despite the fact that serious Chinese emigration had begun as early as the 1840's. White racism in its anti-Sinitic form has produced a unique exclusionary effect on the Chinese that has continually plagued them as a minority in the United States: numerical underrepresentation.[30] The double discriminatory effects of exclusion have made the Chinese the minority's minority. The initial racial discrimination that during the official years of exclusion (1882-1943)[31], the end of which was effected by the pressures of the Second World War and prodding by the U.S.'s Chinese ally,[32] forced the Chinese to lag far behind other minorities as a percentage of the American population is felt at a significant level even today. The underrepresentation of Chinese--and certainly the Chinese American elderly--is no doubt one important factor in their being overlooked as a minority in a country whose social antennae are fitted for the numerically visible minorities (mostly Blacks and Hispanics).

The policy of neglect and the power of positive stereotypes: Coupled with the handicap of numerical deficit, the Asians have had to contend with the dilemma of positive stereotypes and the ambivalences intrinsic to that dilemma. Although stereotypes of minorities per se have generally been conceived and perceived in negative terms, it is the negativity of the stereotypes that makes them clear-cut articles of contention. In the Chinese case, however, there has obtained over time a plethora of mixed stereotypy[33], both negative and positive, that has created parallel perceptual structures of the Chinese minority among non-Asians. The positively skewed stereotypes have endured to at least as great an extent as have the negatively skewed, for while some attempts have been made to counterbalance the negative, the deleterious effects of the positive have been either overlooked because they are not perceived as stereotypes or tolerated because they have been viewed as elements supportive of the upgrading of Chinese imagery.

The power and persistence of positive stereotypes have at the same time induced more precise and deliberate social manipulations that are clearly not in the interest of the Chinese minority. First, other minorities in an attempt to focus majority attention on themselves have endeavored to minimize the minority status of the Chinese and other Asians (and in some instances even argue that the Asians are not a minority). While some such attempts are structured on a superficial knowledge of the Asian social-historical experience that comes very close to profound ignorance[34], others structure their superficiality through variable biases and methodological tautologies.[35] Second, whites have joined the non-Asian minorities in disenfranchising the Asians as a minority group by either endorsing the belief that Asians are not a minority[36] or by expounding gross generalizations (of the positive variety) that inform the Asians that they are both a successful and a model minority whose individual and collective ethnic existence is free from social problems however defined.[37] And third, significant segments of the Asian population, especially among the Chinese, have not only defended the positive stereotypes (knowingly or unknowingly engaging in their own exclusion as a legitimate minority group), but have in broad terms tried to emphasize the stereotypes as a way of avoiding the problematical realities in their communities.[38]

To all intents and purposes, regardless of what kind of social manipulations are conducted against the Chinese and other Asians through the use of positive stereotypy, the primary message delivered to the Asians and the American populous as a whole is that Asian Americans, unlike other Americans, do not have any problems. Thus the establishment of the positive stereotype that is so all-encompassing as to incorporate the entirety of Asian America has in its wake deluded not only the non-Asian segments of American society, but also a not insignificant portion of the Asian segment. That the Chinese have been classified as

an otherwise successful and model minority (assuming that they are a minority at all) can only injure the Chinese in the long run, if only on the basis that 1) the successful and model minority thesis is a falsehood, and 2) the falsehood is widely accepted and will continue to retard efforts to contend with real and existing social problems in the Chinese communities across the country. The power of positive stereotypes remains one of the most difficult deceptions to dispel. Unfortunately, the belief that the Chinese can be neglected by governmental and non-governmental agencies as a legitimate minority impacts geometrically upon the Chinese elderly.

The Chinese elderly, social myth and verity: The popular assumption that traditional (often times ancient) Chinese cultural values have accompanied Chinese Americans through time and space, and are as socially prevalent today among Chinese Americans as they were in the romanticized old-country past, is but a continuation of the positive stereotypy upon which the policy of neglect is hinged. That is not to suggest that American Chinese have failed to retain elements of Chinese cultural values per se. However, all ethnic groups in America must by virtue of being American dilute the import of old-world cultural and social values. While most non-Asian ethnic groups in America are assumed to be American, or more American than not, with American cultural and social values, there persists within the context of the power of positive stereotypes the ongoing assumption that the Chinese have maintained, nearly intact, the full entourage of traditional Chinese culture and social values. With specific regard to the Chinese elderly, coupled with the overall assumption that the Chinese do not have social problems, the majority society's positive perception of the role of the elderly in traditional China credits present-day Chinese American sub-culture with all the refinements calculated to embellish the aging process and the aged. Put in idyllic terms, the popular assumption might be summarized thusly:

> The [Chinese] family not only takes care of the physical needs of the aged but gives them honor in their lifetime and a sense of being immortal in their descendents.[39]

How well, in general, Chinese American familial relations square with the foreign and romanticized past largely determines the extent to which the idyllic stereotype hinders a serious consideration of the status of the Chinese elderly in the United States.

On balance, while one does not suggest a literal volte-face in Chinese American social values away from the Chinese in favor of the American, there is increasing indication that traditional Chinese values concerning the status of the elderly, and various familial obligations toward them by the young, are being discarded by the Chinese Americans, and replaced by the American value system:

> The traditional value of Chinese 'filial piety' no longer holds true in the Chinese-American family system. In the past, the collective efforts of nuclear and extended family systems cared for the Chinese aged. At the present time, both the old and the young Chinese people feel more comfortable when they live in separate households.[40]

The forced imposition, no matter how benevolently intended, of the belief that Asian societies' respect, reverence and care[41] for the elderly applies across the board among America's Asian population is a critical stumbling block to recognizing the fact that Asian American elderly suffer all of the deprivations of old age that the non-Asian elderly do, with the added burden of very often becoming victims of the positive stereotype that they do not suffer those deprivations because of assumed traditional Asian attitudes toward the elderly.

As undeniable evidence of the power of positive stereotypes and the various intervening social factors that have been used to reinforce it, the

Asian American elderly *en masse* were originally intended to be *excluded as minorities* from the 1971 White House Conference on Aging and, presumably, from the White House's policy toward the aged, even though extensive preparations had been made to include the non-Asian minorities in a series of lengthy special reports:

> So pervasive is this myth[that Asian American elderly do not have problems] that the planners of the White House Conference on Aging, the group most knowledgeable in the area of aging needs, failed to include a Special Concerns Session for Asian American elderly as part of its original agenda. While the planning for other Special Concerns Sessions had been in process for many months, the decision to hold a Special Concerns Session for Asian Americans was made only one month prior to the Conference and only because a special request was made by concerned Asian Americans.[42]

As a result of the commitment to point up and oppose the masked negativity of positive stereotypes, a new dimension in the Asian American campaign to counteract the policy of neglect[43], especially as applied to the elderly, had been opened up and made public. The Asian American minorities, albeit small in number and sociopolitical influence, proved that they would no longer tolerate being arbitrarily omitted from or inaccurately characterized within formal governmental minority policy by non-Asians. In a sense, if one were to analogize the unique dilemmas faced by the Asian Americans in their overall attempt to be recognized as minorities, on the one hand, and to guard against conspicuous efforts by others to minimize and even exclude them as true minorities, on the other hand, it could be argued that they are (and have been) engaged in a war on two fronts. With specific regard to establishing their ethnic status, the Asians have been

caught between pincer-like anti-Asiatic attacks spearheaded in the persons of both negative and positive stereotypy, each of which has taken its toll of the numerically underrepresented and politically powerless Asian American minorities. However, the acknowledgment of the second front, that is the insidiousness of positive stereotypes, is a hopeful development of inestimable potentiality in clarifying and illuminating the ethnic status not only of the elderly, but of the Asian Americans as a whole, their diversity notwithstanding. Certainly, the identification, recognition, and publication of the popular American myth that Asian elderly do not have gerontological and other social problems, coupled with the expressed verity that they do have problems and ones of perhaps even greater seriousness than others given the durability of the myth, is substantive reinforcement of the argument that any war on two fronts can only be won by defending oneself on two fronts. Victory, of course, is a long way off. And the battle for the elderly has just begun.

The Chinese American elderly and learned helplessness: To suggest that any theory of helplessness has potential application to the Chinese American elderly is based upon the assumption that those elderly are, to all intents and purposes, helpless. At the risk of overstating the case, and in the process categorizing the elderly as socially inoperative,[44] it should be mentioned that many of America's elderly persons, regardless of ethnicity or race, are not only socially operative but considerably productive. Yet it is also cautioned that they are a minority within a minority. Among the elderly non-white, in this instance with the Chinese in mind, while there are those who encounter minimal difficulties related to aging, the overwhelming majority are not so fortunate. Moreover, compared with their white counterparts, non-white persons' problems "are many times compounded"[45] as a function of their minority status in the United States. Thus in respect of those considerations, given the unique Chinese American social-historical experience[46] and

the altogether peculiar circumstances surrounding Chinese ethnic status as perceived by the non-Asian sectors of the American populous, the theory of learned helplessness is posited as possibly one analytical framework applicable to the Chinese elderly in future research, for in a practical sense, it would appear that many of those elderly are in fact helpless in American society when viewed within the overall context of their special needs and ethnic confines.

Recent studies have confirmed a sense of powerlessness or helplessness[47] among the Asian American elderly in general. With specific regard to racial discrimination, and the kind of social despondency and depression it engenders, many of the elderly adhere to the belief that nothing can be done to stop discrimination. As a result of their belief that the social environment is above and beyond any efforts to control or at least modify it, many of the elderly manifest withdrawal symptoms on both individual and ethnic levels. In part, particularly to non-Asians, the elderly Asians' withdrawal is indistinguishable from assumed social complacency. The negative reality of life for many Asian elderly meshes with positive mythology to form a seemingly inescapable interlocking circle of deception and misery. While it may be well-nigh impossible for many non-Asians to detect the critical contradictions existing between Asian American reality and non-Asian mythology as directed toward Asian Americans, Asians themselves have expressed their own concern by asking what is, perhaps, the most fundamental question involving the Asian American elderly:

> A question remains concerning the reasons for these ethnically introverted and passive responses. Do they arise from ingrained cultural traits, or are they a coping mechanism to deal with racism in a country which has consistently discriminated against and oppressed Asians along with other minority groups?[48]

However, the either/or perception of the problem (cultural trait or coping mechanism) may be an artificial dichotomy when analyzed in the context of learned helplessness.

Learned helplessness as theory: While as a theory learned helplessness has potentially wide application,[49] it may be especially useful in gaining a more definitive understanding of the plight of the Chinese American elderly. The term "learned helplessness" was initially used to describe learning interference that was produced in laboratory test dogs by prior and uncontrollable exposure to electric shocks.[50] It was established that once the dogs learned that their response was independent of negative reinforcement, they later failed to respond to either negative or positive reinforcement. After repeated testing, it was concluded that "learning that reinforcement and responding are independent interferes with learning that responses later control reinforcement."[51] Other studies served to bridge the gap between the applicability of learned helplessness in animals and human beings.[52] While still others blended the concepts of helplessness and internal-external control and determined that learned helplessness could, indeed, be "produced in man."[53]

The expectation that the outcome of a given situation is independent of one's response, learned helplessness, produces three deficits. First, the expectation reduces a person's motivation to control the outcome. Second, it interferes with the process of cognition that would ordinarily signify that a response might control the outcome. And third, if the outcome is traumatic, it produces a state of emotionality (fear) that lasts until the duration of the cognitive belief is replaced by depression. Of the three deficits produced by the negative expectation, the cognitive is particularly critical, for "it is the expectation, not the objective conditions of controllability, that is the crucial determinant of helplessness."[54] (Italics added.) Thus, it is entirely possible

for persons suffering from learned helplessness not to be able to recognize an actually controllable situation (literally to fail even to try to differentiate between a controllable and an uncontrollable situation) because their expectations are negative. The negative cognitive set produced by learned helplessness that leads persons to believe that failure or success in controlling a situation exists independently of their efforts interferes with subsequent learning experiences that would contradict response-reinforcement independence. Should learned helplessness persist over time, depression ensues.

Learned helplessness, depression, and the Chinese elderly: While the factors accounting for a sense of helplessness among many Chinese American elderly are diverse, falling within at least the two broad categories of racial discrimination and cultural alienation,[55] it is suggested that the ultimate manifestation of that sense of helplessness is depression. Depression itself has been subdivided into several varieties for purposes of psychiatric analysis. Of the varieties, four are generally set aside as primary: grief reactions, reactive depression, neurotic depression, and psychotic or endogenous depression. Learned helplessness serves as a model of depression of the reactive variety. In general terms, reactive depression might be summarized as a depressive reaction to "the misery engendered by intolerable life situations."[56] But delivered more in keeping with the learned helplessness theory as a model of reactive depression, the definition can be more precise:

> [Reactive] Depression in this model is specific cognitive distortion of the perception of the ability of one's own responses to change the environment, rather than a general 'pessimism.'[57]

Clinical experimentation has demonstrated the reliability of the assertion that "a significant behavioral manifestation of depression is learned helplessness,"[58]

and that in testing depressed and non-depressed subjects, there is considerable "support for the learned helplessness model of depression."[59]

How extensively reactive depression has permeated the Chinese elderly has yet to come under intensive professional investigation. It is known that depression *per se* can ultimately "lead to suicide attempts."[60] And it is also known that "the Asian American aged suicide rate in certain areas is *three times the national average*."[61] (Italics added.) Especially serious has been the suicide rate among elderly Chinese bachelors, many of whom early in their lives became *forced* bachelors as a result of the United States' anti-Sinitic tradition in the person of exclusion laws, their long-term implications for the Chinese American male-female sex ratio, and various attending pieces of legislation that served to handle the Chinese American population in a near genocidal fashion (as outlined in the early section of this paper). These elderly Chinese *forced bachelors*, often times wrongly referred to as "sojourner males,"[62] have not only been deprived of one of the most powerful and treasured aspects of Chinese culture--*children*--but have been left in their old age without any families at all. They constitute a unique segment of America's aged population, and one almost wholly the end product of America's anti-Asiatic activities. They are the United States' "geriatiric orphan[s],"[63] lost to all practical intents and purposes to a familial past, present, or future. At the same time, depression and suicide are by no means restricted to Chinese elderly men, nor even to the geriatric orphans, for elderly Chinese women, too, described in appropriate words to highlight a lifetime of helplessness, are believed to commit suicide as "a final assertion of control over their own lives."[64]

Although suicide may be the most extreme indication of reactive depression, one closely akin to a complex assemblage of factors subsumed under the heading "mental aberration[s]"[65] that are prevalent among the Chinese American elderly, it

is evocative of the existence of gradational reactive depression, degrees of protracted learned helplessness. Thus, while most of the elderly who have learned to be helpless over time do not commit suicide, they live in a world that is so at variance with both the Chinese and the American ideals of the golden years, suicide can with the addition of a single gradation more appear to be the rational way to escape. It is assumed that the majority of those persons suffering from learned helplessness reside, depending upon personal experiences, individual personalities, social-familial relationships, and so on, at about the middle to high areas of an imagined learned helplessness depression scale that runs from one to ten. It can be hypothesized that the observed passive withdrawal and the ethnic introversion behavior practiced by many of the elderly Chinese is an expression of reactive depression resultant from their feelings of helplessness, and that those feelings of helplessness are manifestations of a negative cognitive set that has been developed after years of racial discrimination and cultural alienation--over both of which broadly defined the elderly have been convinced they have no power.

That learned helplessness can be produced in human beings means that persons can learn to be helpless through the actions and activities of other persons. It is possible, then, that the inducement of learned helplessness and its reactive depression concomitant can constitute a crucial linkage in understanding the behavioral patterns of the elderly Chinese in dealing with their environment. The belief that passive-withdrawal/ethnic introversion behavior is a function of either one or the other members of an assumed dichotomy, cultural trait/coping mechanism, may be modified to find a kind of unity within the context of learned helplessness. For it has been suggested that the inducement of reaction-reinforcement independence has created "a trait-like system of expectancies that responding [to one's environment] is futile."[66] The presumed cultural trait currently

thought to be a cultural carry-over from Chinese society may instead be an induced trait that is largely, if not completely, a product of American society. The passive-withdrawal/ethnic-introversion behavior observed among the Chinese American elderly, rather than being a kind of exotic and romanticized form of cultural humility imported from China, might well find its genesis in the Chinese American socio-historical past and present, with much of its longitudinal persistence being the result of racial discrimination and cultural alienation.

Extending the belief that learned helplessness can be an induced trait, whose primary deficits are motivational, cognitive, and emotional disturbances, and whose critical dimensions are the development of a negative cognitive set that interferes with the ability to perceive contradictions to response-reinforcement independence and the consequent evolution of reactive depression, two hypotheses can be constructed: 1) The presumed cultural/trait-coping mechanism dichotomy can be incorporated into the unilocular concept of learned helplessness as an induced trait, whereby the cultural aspect of the trait is viewed as a function of American society as it has impacted on the Chinese minority, and the coping aspect is, as learned helplessness would suggest, an actual inability to cope voluntarily and successfully with the environment. 2) Learned helplessness as an induced trait has interfered with the ability of the Chinese American elderly to cope with their environment because a) they cannot perceive controllable situations in their own lives, and hence cannot differentiate between those that are controllable and those that are uncontrollable, and b) their negative perception/cognitive set is translated into a dysfunctional coping mechanism, the behavioral manifestations of which are passive-withdrawal/ethnic-introversion, and both of which are encapsulated in the conviction that nothing can be done to counteract racial discrimination and cultural alienation. That the Chinese American elderly do not, in fact, cope with their environment points up the circularity

of the learned helplessness phenomenon. The Chinese American elderly do not cope successfully with their environment because they are helpless, and they are helpless because they do not cope successfully with their environment.

Self-determinism for the Chinese American elderly: Learned helplessness is not necessarily an irreversible, permanent condition. On the contrary, there is considerable evidence to suggest that 'directive therapy,'[67] the teaching of response-relief, can begin to reverse the motivational, cognitive and emotional deficits produced by learned helplessness. While there are, obviously, no guarantees that all persons who are victims of learned helplessness can be rehabilitated through directive therapy, as different people respond differently to therapy of any kind, one could theorize on the basis of experimentation with directive therapy that the vast majority of helpless persons can be taught to unlearn their helplessness, so to speak, if both professional and lay assistance is provided them on a consistent and definitive basis.[68] Unlearning learned helplessness, of course, does not imply that individuals under directive therapy are led to believe that they have complete control over their environment. Unlearning learned helplessness is, in ess[illegible]e process of instilling in the individual the incentive to control those asp[illegible]f his or her environment that should be controlled to the advantage of the individual (as perceived by the individual), given the individual's human and material resources as factors capable of effecting change, and of developing in the individual the perceptual acumen with which to differentiate between those aspects of the environment that are controllable and those that are uncontrollable. In toto, directive therapy and its goal of reversing learned helplessness amounts to the dissolution of the negative cognitive set whose expectancy level is based upon the assumption that there is futility in responding to one's environment. Self-determinism, the belief that one is competent and efficacious in controlling environmental elements which should be

controlled for the benefit of oneself to the extent that one can in fact control them, signifies a return to a condition of relative pre-learned helplessness.

That the cause, cure and prevention of learned helplessness are inextricably bound to the concept of control is manifest. Likewise, the extent to which one perceives oneself to be the internal center or the locus of control of one's own life seems to dictate the degree to which one will endeavor to exact that control. Self-determinism, as a generic catchword identifying the individual as the center of control, is essential to the well-being of the elderly, for it has been argued that, coupled with other contingent factors, "locus of control is a significant variable in successful aging."[69] Control, with its sense of competency and efficacy,[70] is the single outstanding characteristic of self-determinism, while self-determinism marks the most definitive condition necessary to prevent or reverse helplessness and depression. For the elderly Asian American minorities in general and the Chinese American elderly in particular, self-determinism whether it comes in the form of helplessness reversal or helplessness prevention[71] is of major importance in establishing a sense of purpose and control, a sense not of being at odds with one's external environment, but rather of being at ease with one's external environment insofar as the core of one's destiny is ultimately believed to be resident within oneself.

Prospects for the Chinese American elderly: Although a number of studies have already pinpointed the elderly as one of the problematic segments of the Chinese American populous,[72] no substantive testing and follow-up research have been conducted using the learned helplessness model of depression as an analytical framework calculated, in theory, to add definition and precision, and hopefully some solutions, to the difficulties facing that segment of Chinese America. It might be suggested that particularly well suited to act in concert with the learned helplessness model is the life-span developmental perspective on minority aging.

Unlike certain of the more widely utilized theories on aging, the life-span developmental perspective is straightforward in its emphasis on race and ethnicity as acceptable factors in analyzing minority elderly. Among the most crucial elements taken into consideration are: 1) the individual history of the elderly person, 2) the social history of the ethnic or racial group of which the person is a member, 3) the cultural values and attitudes of the person, and 4) the environment in which the person is presently denizened.[73] By factoring in various elements peculiar to race and ethnicity, in the context of aging, it is assumed that not only will there be differential degrees of helplessness extant between the Chinese American elderly and their white counterparts, but also variant levels of helplessness attributed to different life-span development experiences among the Chinese American diaspora. Primarily as a result of sixty-two years of Chinese immigration restriction and exclusion, coupled more recently to liberalized immigration laws permitting of equitable Asian representation, the Chinese American elderly can be stratified on at least three levels for analysis: (1) those who lived the better part of their lives in China and emigrated late in life to America, (2) those who in their early to middle years emigrated to America, and (3) those who were born and raised in the United States.

Within the expansive bifurcation of racial discrimination and cultural alienation as American societal inputs affecting the Chinese minority, it can from tentative expectations be assumed that learned helplessness will vary in degree and emphasis between those inputs, while in the context of being both old and Chinese the elderly will find themselves a unitary minority's minority. Thus in testing for causal factors leading to learned helplessness among the strata, one might determine, in general terms, that those of stratum (1) experience a greater degree of helplessness through cultural alienation (language, familial rearrangements and membership status), rather than racial discrimination, being exposed to racism over

a shorter period of time as well as partly protected from it by immigrant propensity to ethnic enclaves. Stratum (3) might be something of a mirror reflection of (1) with helplessness stemming more directly from long-term exposure to anti-Asiatic racism, whereas the cultural dimension would as a diluted Chinese American version be less conflictive with American culture per se. Existing somewhere between strata (1) and (3), stratum (2) might be concluded to be a kind of middle-child group who, having been exposed long enough to both the Chinese and American cultures and to the trauma of anti-Asiatic discrimination, have learned to be helpless on both sides of the bifurcation. Doubtless any number of factors could be integrated into or otherwise controlled for in the testing and analysis and comparison of the strata not only with one another, but also with other Asian groups. The compound-complex configuration of the Chinese elderly strata provides some indication of the variability of directive therapy needed to address individual encounters with learned helplessness and depression and the essentiality to instill self-determinism among those strata.

Whether the Chinese American elderly will ultimately be recognized as a fully legitimate minority, or whether they will be ignored or omitted and consequently relegated to a position beyond the scope of America's social conscience and obligations, will depend upon the status of the Chinese Americans as a whole. That among other things the Chinese have to contend with the all-pervasive weakness of numerical underrepresentation, incurring in its path extreme sociopolitical helplessness and deceptive socioeconomic distension[74] both of which have made them targets for the ambivalences of whites and non-Asian minorities, identifies them as a particularly vulnerable group who have had to struggle, ironically, to prove themselves an actual racial minority.

With special regard to the elderly, while current census data indicate that, beginning in 1965, the influx of Chinese immigrants has again characterized the

Chinese American population to be one largely consisting of foreign-born persons, there is no evidence to suggest that the above-suggested trichotomous division of the Chinese elderly will collapse in favor of strata (1) and (2). In the immediate future, certainly, given the fact that present immigration increase exceeds native population birthrate among the Chinese, there will in all likelihood develop a particularly critical need to confront cultural alienation, in all its diverse forms, as the most pressing cause of learned helplessness among the elderly. In the long-run, however, the increase in the Chinese American population as a collective will add an undeniable continuity and depth to the creation of a numerically substantial Chinese American base population, stratum (3), a base population expanded both by native birthrate and ongoing Chinese emigration to the United States. Presuming that there will not be a significant drop in the Chinese rate of emigration to the United States (achieving a maximum of approximately 20,000 persons per year), the base population of Chinese America will by birthrate begin to exceed the rate of immigration. Consequently, although maintaining the emphasis upon cultural alienation as one cause of learned helplessness among the elderly, greater attention will be directed to dealing with racial discrimination (possibly intensified in reaction to the growth of the Chinese population) in its overt and covert forms as another major cause of learned helplessness.

For the benefit of the elderly and for that of the Chinese minority, explorations into the presence and the cure of learned helplessness should be initiated with the kind of urgency and concern warranted by the effects of that disorder. Empirical testing and research would necessarily constitute the most productive and immediate demonstration of the conviction that, if human beings have at all the right to live as entities to whom self-determinism is the most intimate and precious substance of personal identity, the loss of competency and control in the life of one person shatters in its way the dignity of all humanity. The growing

Chinese American population has among its numbers a representative body of elderly persons, as has American society at large, whose aspirations and dreams, and whose sensitivities and compassions, have not diminished with the crescendo of time. For it is in they, in whom the articulated and abiding hope and promise lay, that the cure and the prevention of learned helplessness must through sacrifice and determination ultimately for the sake of those still young find their final victory in the destruction of the causes of that affliction.[75]

FOOTNOTES

1. The richness of diversity among the Asian/Pacific peoples tends to debilitate against all-inclusive statements concerning them. However, in an attempt to add some definition to that diversity, it is assumed that minimally the Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Thai, Laotian, Cambodian, East Indian, and Samoan groups are included. Ideally, persons of East and Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Pacific constitute the body of Asian representation.

2. Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., The Myth and Reality of Aging in America (Washington, D.C., 1975), vi.

3. For an estimation somewhat more conservative than that of Harris, but of more thoroughgoing proportions from a demographer's point of view see: David D. McFarland, "The Aged in the 21st Century: A Demographer's View," in Lissy F. Jarvik (ed.), Aging Into the 21st Century: Middle-agers Today (New York, 1978), 5-22.

4. Lorin A. Baumhover and Joan Dechow Jones (eds.), Handbook of American Aging Programs (Westport, Connecticut, 1977), xi-xiii. Also see: The Older American Worker: Age Discrimination in Employment, Report of the Secretary of Labor to Congress, June, 1965, (U.S. Department of Labor, 1965). Washington, D.C., 3 and 17.

5. Alexander Saxton, The Indispensable Enemy, Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California (California, 1971), 19-45.

6. Paul C. P. Siu, "The Sojourner," American Journal of Sociology, 58, (July, 1952-May, 1953), 35.

7. Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer, The Anti-Chinese Movement in California (Illinois, 1939), 14.

8. The Book Club of California 1972 Keepsake Series, Cathay in Eldorado: The Chinese in California (San Francisco, 1972), 1.

9. Paul M. DeFalla, "Lantern in the Western Sky," The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly, LXII, 1, (October, 1960), 63-64.

10. Stuart Creighton Miller, The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese 1758-1882 (California, 1969), 192.

11. Rodman W. Paul, "The Origins of the Chinese Issue in California," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXV, 2, (September, 1938), 190-191.

12. "The Chinese Question," Special Message of the Governor, and, in Reply Thereto, Two Letters of the Chinamen; and a Memorial of the Citizens of San Francisco. Executive Department, Sacramento City, April 23, 1852: Printed at the Office of the San Francisco Herald, Montogomery Street, 1852, 1-5. Governor of California John Bigler was the first public official to issue an anti-Sinitic pronouncement in public.

13. Charles Caldwell Dobie, San Francisco's Chinatown (New York, 1936), 106.

14. S. Wells Williams, L.L.D., Chinese Immigration, A paper read before the Social Science Association at Saratoga, September 10, 1879 (New York, 1879), 33.

15. The Friends of International Right and Justice, "How the U.S. Treaty with China is Observed in California--for Consideration of the American People and Government," San Francisco: September 13, 1877, 4-6.

16. Memorial of the Legislature of the State of California to Congress, on The Dangers of Chinese Immigration (San Francisco, 1862), 5.

17. Victor G. and Brett deBary Nee, Longtime Californ' (New York, 1973), 32.

18. Ng Poon Chew (ed. Chung Sai Yat Po), The Treatment of the Exempt Classes of Chinese in the United States: A Statement from the Chinese in America (San Francisco, California, 1908), 4.

19. Kwang Chang Ling, "Why Should the Chinese Go? A Pertinent Inquiry from a Mandarin High in Authority," (San Francisco, 1878), 14.

20. Connie Young Yu, "The Chinese in American Courts," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, 4, (Fall, 1972), 28.

21. Russell McCuloch Story, "Oriental Immigration into the Phillipines," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, XXXIV, 2, (September, 1909), 169.

22. Ibid., 169.

23. Here the importance of American anti-Sinicism and its application through miscegenation laws is clear. The area containing the largest numbers of Chinese outside of China is Southeast Asia. Although today many of those Chinese are generations removed from China, they initially emigrated as sojourners. Unlike the United States, there were not, for the most part, formal regulations erected by the indigenous peoples--based upon race--to prevent the Chinese from intermarrying with indigenous (non-Chinese) women. Consequently, many of the Chinese who did not have wives, and even some who did have Chinese wives, intermarried with the indigenous peoples and in the process added to the growth of the Chinese population. See, for example: W. F. Wertheim, East-West Parallels: Sociological Approaches to Modern Asia (The Hague, 1964), 48.

24. The American policy of classifying the children of mixed blood as full members of the non-white group is still widely practiced. There is no reason to believe that any children of Chinese and American parents would not have been officially listed as Chinese. Hence they would have constituted an augmentation of the Chinese American population as well as first generation American citizens by birth.

25. There were, of course, exceptions to the rule. Some Chinese men did have their wives in the United States. The wives had entered before discriminatory legislation barred their entry.

26. Yu, "The Chinese in American Courts," 28.

27. Ibid., p. 24. The express intent of the Act, as a supplement to the other factors decreasing the already tiny Chinese population, was to prevent the development and expansion of the Chinese American family as a domestic American unit capable of minimally replacing and maximally expanding the Chinese American population.

28. Betty Lee Sung, A Survey of Chinese-American Manpower and Employment (New York, 1976), 2.

29. Melford S. Weiss, Valley City: A Chinese Community in America (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1974), 32.

30. Census of Population, Final Report PC(L)-B1, U.S. Summary, U.S.G.P.G., 1970.

31. Tang Tsou, America's Failure in China, 1941-1950 (Chicago, Illinois, 1963), 57.

32. Yu Pin, Reverend Catholic Bishop, Hearing, May 19, 1943, "Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Acts," before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, Seventy-Eighth Congress, First Session, on HR 1882 and HR 2309, 14.

33. Eugene Franklin Wong, On Visual Media Racism: Asians in the American Motion Pictures (New York, 1978), 106.

34. For instance, see: H. Edward Ransford, Race and Class in American Society, Black, Chicano, Anglo (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1977). While there is neither space nor time in which to critique the arbitrariness with which Ransford has treated of the Asians, and the peculiar and superficial characteristics of his analysis, suffice it to say that he summarily dismisses the seriousness of the Asians' ethnic experience and status by saying: (35), ". . ., Asian-Americans have not experienced the long-range powerlessness of the three 'conquered minorities'" Blacks, Chicanos, and American Indians . For a view counter to the kind

of insensitivity and arbitrariness exemplified by Ransford, see: Lowell Chun-Hoon, "Teaching the Asian-American Experience: Alternative to the Neglect and Racism in Textbooks," Amerasia Journal, 3, 1 (Summer, 1975) particularly (50), in which Chun-Hoon states: ". . . an examination of these Chinese communities reveals problems of drug addiction, overcrowding, deteriorating housing, unemployment, and political powerlessness that rival or exceed the problems of any barrio, reservation, or black ghetto in America."

35. See: Robert M. Jiobu, "Earnings Differentials Between Whites and Ethnic Minorities: The Casses of Asian Americans, Blacks, and Chicanos," Sociology and Social Research, 61:1 (October, 1976). Again, there is neither time nor space for a substantive critique. However, quoting white sources, Jiobu immediately states: "Varon (1967) even suggests that Japanese Americans should no longer be considered a minority if, following Wirth, the term designates groups enjoying lesser status and fewer privileges than the majority," (25). As for Chicanos and Blacks, he says: "In contrast, Chicanos and Blacks bear out the traditional argument. That they are relatively deprived and have been the objects of prejudice and discrimination needs no formal documentation." He also states that "Asian Americans have attained more in the way of socioeconomic advancement . . ." For alternative views see: Bob H. Suzuki, "Education and the Socialization of Asian Americans: A Revisionist Analysis of the 'Model Minority' Thesis," Amerasia Journal, 4, 2, (1977), particularly 38-43. Also see Sung, A Survey of Chinese-American Manpower and Employment, 137-150.

36. Sung, A Survey of Chinese-American Manpower and Employment, 131-132.

37. "Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S.," U.S. News and World Report (December 26, 1966). Also see: Julian Makaroff, "America's Other Racial Minority: Why Japanese-Americans Fare Better Than U.S. Negroes," Eastern World (November/December, 1966).

38. Pei-Ngor Chen, "The Chinese Community in Los Angeles," Social Casework, 51, 10 (December, 1970) 591.

39. Albert R. Chandler, "The Traditional Chinese Attitude Toward Old Age," Journal of Gerontology, 4-5, (1945-1950), 240.

40. Pei-Ngor Chen, "The Chinese Community in Los Angeles," 592. Also see: Eva Cheng, with the assistance of Gladys Hom and Mary Jean Hong, The Elder Chinese (San Diego, 1978), 25.

41. Robert Havighurst, "Ageing in Western Society," in David Hobman (ed.), The Social Challenge of Ageing (New York, 1978), 33.

42. The Asian-American Elderly. Reports of the Special Concerns Sessions, 1971 White House Conference on Aging, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971, 2.

43. Ibid., 2.

44. Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., 47.

45. Mrs. Luisa L. Trinidad, "The Aging Minority," in E. Percil Stanford (ed.), Minority Aging (San Diego, 1974), 22.

46. Jon Hendricks and C. Davis Hendricks, Aging in Mass Society: Myths and Realities (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1977), 370.

47. See, for example: City of Chicago. Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens. Research Division. "A Summary of the Status of Elderly Asians in Chicago." Chicago: January, 1976.

48. Bok-Lim C. Kim, "Problems and Service Needs of Asian Americans in Chicago: An Empirical Study," Amerasia Journal, 5, 2, (1978), 41.

49. As one interesting application, see: Lenore E. Walker, "Battered Women and Learned Helplessness," Victimology: An International Journal, 2, 3-4, (1977-1978). It should be noted that there are many theories associated with gerontological research. Among them are: disengagement theory, ex.: E. Cumming and

W. E. Henry, Growing Old: The Process of Disengagement (New York, 1961). Activity theory, ex.: Z. S. Blau, Old Age in a Changing Society (New York, 1973). Exchange theory, ex.: R. M. Emerson, "Exchange Theory, Parts I & II," in J. Berger, M. Zelditch and B. Anderson (eds.), Sociological Theories in Progress, Volume II (Boston, 1972), 38-87. Social Breakdown theory, ex.: J. Zusman, "Some Explanations of the Changing Appearance of Psychotic Patients: Antecedents of the Social Breakdown Syndrome Concept," The Millbank Memorial Fund Quarterly LXIV, 1, 1966. And the Age Stratification theory, to name a few, ex.: M. W. Riley, M. Johnson and A. Foner, Aging and Society, Vol. three: A Sociology of Age Stratification (New York, 1972).

50. See: J. B. Overmier and M. E. P. Seligman, "Effects of Inescapable Shock upon Subsequent Escape and Avoidance Learning," Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology, 63, (1967).

51. William R. Miller and Martin E. P. Seligman, "Depression and Learned Helplessness in Man," Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 84, 3, (1975), 228.

52. Jerry W. Thornton and Paul D. Jacobs, "Learned Helplessness in Human Subjects," Journal of Experimental Psychology, 87, 3, (1971), 371.

53. Donald S. Hiroto, "Locus of Control and Learned Helplessness," Journal of Experimental Psychology, 102, 2, (1974), 192.

54. Martin E. P. Seligman, Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death (San Francisco, 1975), 49.

55. See: Bok-Lim C. Kim, "Asian-Americans: No Model Minority," Social Work, 18, 3, (May, 1973), 51.

56. Hobman, The Social Challenge of Ageing, 206.

57. William R. Miller and Martin E. P. Seligman, "Depression and the Perception of Reinforcement," Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 82, 1, (1973), 62.

58. Ibid., 73.

59. William R. Miller and Martin E. P. Seligman, "Depression and Learned Helplessness in Man," Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 84, 3 (1975), 237.

60. Hobman, The Social Challenge of Ageing, 207.

61. The Asian-American Elderly, 2.

62. Stanford M. Lyman, Chinese Americans (New York, 1974), 152.

63. Richard A. Kalish and Sharon Mariwaki, "The World of the Asian American," Journal of Social Issues, 29, 2, (1973), 207.

64. Lyman, Chinese Americans, 154.

65. Sam Yuen. The Older Person in San Francisco's Chinatown (Self Help for the Elderly), 1975. (Unpublished paper.)

66. Donald S. Hiroto and Martin E. P. Seligman, "Generality of Learned Helplessness in Man," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 31, 2, (1975), 327.

67. Seligman, Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death, 57.

68. Ibid., 57. Laboratory dogs that had been taught to be helpless were provided directive therapy by pulling them by a leash into a safe area of the shuttle box. While at first the dogs literally had to be dragged across the box, so complete were their feelings of helplessness, in time even without directive therapy "each dog initiated its own response, and thereafter never failed to escape."

69. Lenita Queen and Carl B. Freitag, "A Comparison of Externality, Anxiety, and Life Satisfaction in Two Aged Populations," Journal of Psychology, 98 (1979), 73.

70. For an interesting discussion of decrement as well as competence and efficacy among the elderly, see: Vern L. Bengtson, "Self-Determination: A Social-psychologic Perspective on Helping the Aged," Geriatrics, 28 (December 1973).

71. On occasion, behavioral immunization, prior experience with being able to control trauma, has been successful in decreasing the probability that one will become helpless. However, little research has been conducted on this aspect of the learned helplessness theory. Just how much immunization would be necessary to render an individual relatively safe from becoming helpless is speculative.

72. In addition to those quoted earlier, see: Richard A. Kalish and Sam Yuen, "Americans of East Asian Ancestry: Aging and the Aged," The Gerontologist, 2, 1, Part 2 (Spring 1971).

73. Barbara W. K. Yee, "Asian-American Elderly: A Life-Span Developmental Approach to Minorities and Learned Helplessness," a paper presented at the American Psychological Association Convention, San Francisco, August, 1977.

74. Not surprisingly, many of those who dismiss the Chinese as a legitimate minority emphasize only those census and other statistical data that would appear to exclude the Chinese as a racial and a still very much deprived minority. But as a more sophisticated analysis of the aggregate data reveals, measured against the actual socioeconomic history and reality of Chinese America, the Chinese are concentrated at the extreme ends of the educational, occupational, and economic poles. See: Sung, A Survey of Chinese-American Manpower and Employment, 224. Just why the negative pole, those data demonstrating the deprivations and deficits presently besetting many of the Chinese, is consistently ignored and omitted by those who are anxious to exclude the Chinese as a minority is an area of investigation yet to be explored. In the case of whites, it might simply be that recognition of another minority as a minority is racially repellent. With regard to other racial minorities, one possibility might be, as one student of racism has observed: "racism . . . affects people of color as well as whites . . ." See: Robert Blauner, Racial Oppression in America (New York, 1972), 71.

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